1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba



The Thakaundrove title of Ratu, having been adopted by government, is now tending to displace Roko. The practice is often to use Ratu before the Christian name, and Roko before the Fijian name, as Ratu Tevita, alias Roko Ului. I have never heard the title Roko or Andi used before a person's full name, when there was a shortened form, thus Roko Ului, Roko Thovu, Andi La, but Uluilakemba, Thovutimambula, Landu or Landu-vunirewa. Nobles and commoners alike put Ratu before the name of the High Chief Finau, also before his nephew's, and I have never heard the name of the High Chief's sister without the Andi. Ratu Finau's children are always spoken of as Ratu Te, Ratu Nai, and Andi Ethe. The late High Chief was always called Ratu. As for the rest, it depended upon their degrees, relationship, and acquaintanceship.

These titles were not limited to the nobility proper. A woman of the herald clan of Natokatoka was frequently called Andi Rua; but she had noble blood. Finau of Tanggalevu, the wife of Kasa of Vatuwangga, was sometimes termed Andi. I have heard the prefix Ratu applied to the name of the Lord of Tumbou; he was noble in Matuku.

From *roko* comes the verb *vakarokoroko* (to say *roko*)—a term which covers all forms of politeness. There is a polite speech (*vosa vakarokoroko*) used in addressing people of quality; it consists in using metaphors instead of the proper words for parts of the body, relationships and common actions of noblemen. Many of these expressions are no longer heard and many are unknown to the young people.

| English | Fijian Expression | Literal Meaning |
|---|---|---|
| Body | kuli ni tambua | ivory skin |
| Head | vanua i thake | place above |
| Hand | i thaka | instrument |
| Leg | i turatura | stand |
| Eye | i serau | brightness |
| Ear | tamba ni manumanu | bird's wing |
| Nose | i rengu | thing to kiss with |
| Mouth | ndraka ni kula, tembe ni kula, | parrot's throat, lip |
| Back | ndaku ni vesi | back of green heart |
| Throat | ndomo ni vonu | throat of the turtle |
| Old man | turanga ndina | true gentleman |
| Father | i tumbutumbu | origin |
| Father | ona turanga | his lord |
| Father and son | turanga veivakasikavi | nobles who visit one another in sickness |
| Mother and son | turanga veivakarikati | nobles who jump on one another (possibly refers to the mother jumping the child on her lap) |
| Wife | i solonga | |
| House | loma ni koro | center of the town |
| Come and eat | mai tauri | come and take |

1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba



576
195

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| To go | lea<br>ka | |
| To sit | wiri | |
| To say | vakatambuna | to make sacred |
| To die | siri | to go wrong |
| To die | mbale | to fall |
| To die | mothe | to sleep[3] |
| To sleep | vakathethengu<br>vakarerengge, tavo | to rest<br>to take care of<br>to lift up |
| To awake | lave lave | |
| To bathe | tumbutumbu | |
| To be angry | toka wale | to sit doing nothing |
| Please give me | vakandrakai mai | take trouble to give |
| Yes | ia saka, ie | |

The commonest respectful terms are the use of the second person plural, and the particle *saka*. The second person plural is in common use between people who are not intimate. The word *saka* is probably the root of *saka-saka* (awkward) and is therefore a self-depreciating particle. It has been identified by Europeans as a vocative equivalent to "Sir," and is now prefixed to letters. But as the analogy of other dialects proves, it occupies in the sentence the position not of the vocative, but of an adverb. In Mualevu, where the Thakaundrove speech dialect is spoken, *vakatha* (badly) is used. The word *lea* is also used by elderly polite persons very much like *saka*, only more extensively. It can be used between the possessive and the noun as: *a omundou lea thakathaka;* also it is used as a verb instead of "go."

No hard and fast rule can be laid down for the use of polite language. There is not a man who will not use the particle *saka* in speaking to the High Chief, or who will omit to call his leg a stand, "because he is the lord of our land; his title is Tui Naiau." The people of Tumbou and Levuka will call a great nobleman's leg a leg; but the countryfolk and the people of Lau will call his leg a stand. Some small men even in Tumbou will speak of the Lord of Tumbou's leg as a stand. All these words, however, are now more or less abandoned except for the Lord of Naiau.

The ordinary greeting is "awake." For a great person there is special salutation called *tama* which is sung out on first meeting him or passing his house in the morning. The men say *"o oa"* in a deep voice, dropping about a tone on the *a*. The women sing out *"ninggo"* rising about a tone on the *nggo* and drawing it out. The great man does not answer the *tama*. When once the sun has reached the zenith this salutation is forbidden, and "It is night, Sir," is used. The great man answers, "It is night." The *tama* is

[3] A writer in the Native Gazette (12), probably a man from Mbau, says that a nobleman who dies naturally is said to sleep; if he is murdered it is said that he fell.

1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba



576
195

of great importance, much care being exercised in its use. It is never accorded to Europeans, except to the Governor and Native Commissioner. All salute the Lord of Naiau in this way, except Salesi, who never uses the *tama* to any one. All Tumbou, including Tuimereke and Roko Malani, but excluding Naivi, use the *tama* in addressing the chief's elder sister's son; and all do so in addressing the chief's elder sister. All country folk address it to Tuimereke. If they meet the great man on the road they put down any burden they are carrying and either standing or squatting, sing the *tama*. None but countryfolk will use the *tama* to the Lord of Tumbou.

In speaking respectfully to a person the natives speak more slowly, emphasize the stress, pitch and accent, and drag out the last accented syllable. A small man always sits down when speaking to a great man; all do so in presence of the Lord of Naiau.

## THE TURANGA

565
554

The word *turanga* is usually translated "chief," which is misleading, for it also has other meanings. In the singular, it may refer to "the Chief"; in Lakemba, to the High Chief, the Tui Naiau. It may also be used in referring to some particular noble or merely have the force of "gentleman." The minor chiefs are referred to as *turanga ni vanua* or *turanga ndina ni vanua*, the chiefs of the land, or true chiefs of the land. A village headman is *turanga ni koro*, and the chief of a clan is *turanga ni matanggali*. In the plural, *turanga* usually refers to a group of nobles. If a member of one of the four clans Matailakemba, Vatuwangga, Naivi, Koroithumu is asked to what clan he belongs, he will probably say "the nobles" (*ko ira na turanga*). The word is here used in the sense, as it were, of "the Royal Family," who are not chiefs, but gentle-folk, descendants of Niumataiwalu, and therefore known also as "Children of the High Chief" (Luve ni Sau). This meaning is the commonest in Lakemba, where it is used also of the whole of Tai, as opposed to Tumbou, or the Land. In speaking of *turanga* the villagers may refer either to the nobility proper, or to the whole of Tumbou. To many Fijians *turanga* merely means "those at the head of affairs"—the chief, the leading members of the nobility, and the chief's elders. I translate the word as chief or noble, gentleman or gentry, whichever the context seems to call for, though this introduces a definiteness which may not be involved in the original.

565

The term *ngone turanga* means literally noble youth, but is used of people of mature age. It applies to the whole family of the High Chief, old or young, even a bastard. In the Southern Islands it would be used of the High Chief's father's younger brother, who is eighty. The term is never applied to minor chiefs, and is, therefore, essentially confined to the nobility and might be rendered "prince." I once heard it used of "the sons of the

1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba



He draws out the last syllable but one, and then pushes forward the offering. All present say, "*E.*" The recipient's herald claps hands, touches the offering and says, "I touch the [article] that has jumped from you, the gentlemen of So-and-so; so let us be in health and concord, and let the work of the Church and the Government increase."

He quickens his pace and raises his voice to a shout over the last sentence. Then all exclaim, "Mana, e indina, amunduo, munduo, nduo" (Be it effective, let it be true).[12] The people having thus exclaimed clap hands slowly, as always in ceremonial.

The speech of presentation is always long. While the theme is always the same—we are poor, we are offering the best we have, so do not be angry—the details are left to the speaker. Thus I once heard the Lord of Tumbou say, "It is known that our land consists of small islands, and the surf beats the top of the hills; there are only small plants; there are no big plants." The reason why kava and all "noble" (*vakaturanga*) things are offered up ceremonially is that the chief may not be angry if anything goes wrong. It is the custom to depreciate what is offered, thus a large cloth is called shreds (*mandra ni ngatu*); a towel, a thing to rub (*ka ni solo*); a good cloth is a rag (*i suai*); a mat becomes thatch (*ndra ni timbi*); and a whale's tooth, a small tooth; puddings are described as food with sauce (*i pekepeke*).

The acknowledgment is short. While no part of it is fixed, nowadays, it usually contains a reference to the Church and State, if there is no more particular object, otherwise it contains a prayer on behalf of the donors' intentions as "may the object for which you have come be attained," or "may our discussion succeed," or "let the wind be fair to Oneata." Before a Provincial Council, the Lord of Tumbou acknowledged a presentation to the High Chief thus: "Let the decisions and the dispersal be clean, and let the health of our chief be good."

Manufactured articles presented on great occasions (*solevu*) are called *kamunanga* when acknowledged; the herald who receives it on touching it calls out *kamunaaanga*, then he utters the prayer, "The *kamunanga* brought by you, etc." Kava is acknowledged as *i sevusevu* (first fruits).

Whale's teeth when offered up are not placed on the ground, the one who presents them holding them by the cord, supporting them from underneath with his other hand. After offering they are handed to the receiving chief who takes them by the cord and passes them to his herald, who holding them in the same manner as the giver, touches them with his nose.

Offerings are described by various terms according to their purpose; the

[12] I do not know the meaning of *amunduo*, but it is a common ceremonial exclamation throughout Fiji.

1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba



cried on the slightest provocation because they are proud (*yalo levu*). A Tumbou boy announced that if the cook, a lowborn fellow from Waitambu, gave him cheek he would return it; when the cook scolded him for helping himself to salt without leave he cried. One boy of thirteen being slapped by the cook cried, not, as he afterwards explained, because it hurt, but from defiance (*yalokaukaua*). A boy when insulted would not strike, but sit down and vent his grief.

## Puberty

I examined a number of boys for signs of puberty and took their ages from the provincial register. Out of ten boys ranging from fourteen years and three months to seventeen and two months, four, averaging sixteen and eleven months had well developed pubic hairs; two, averaging sixteen, had a beginning; four, averaging fourteen and seven months, none. At about the age of thirteen boys become particular about exposing themselves.

I do not know at what age menses begin. There is no observance when they start, except that girls begin to use the *tama* salutation; if a girl sings out "*ninggo*," it is known her periods have commenced. Boys begin the *tama* quite young, at no specified age.

## Circumcision

I use the word circumcision regardless of its etymology, because whatever may be the differences of technique in exposing the *glans penis*, it is all one custom and a general term is needed for that custom.

It is called in Lauan *teve*, but the word is not used before women; in their presence, and in polite conversation, the word *sili* (to bathe) is used. Women have no scruples about discussing it under that name, though I have not heard them allude to details. Another term is *vala*, to do, act upon. Women may not be present at circumcision.

In the olden days a boy was grown (*thauravou ndina*) before getting circumcized; some had already slept with women. Now they are circumcized at about the fifteenth or sixteenth year. In the school, boys about ten or twelve started a craze for circumcision. The reason was that being alone in the school they were not bashful as they would have been in the village. Normally the date is fixed not by the boy but by the parents' ability to provide a feast. A noble youth is not circumcized till he is big because a feast has to be made. A noble youth also has other boys circumcized with him, who are called *i loloku*, a word also applied to persons killed at a nobleman's death. One of my boys, Longanimothe, had two *i loloku*, one a bastard of Vatuwangga, his clan; another an Ono boy who stood in the relation of son to his adoptive mother, whose grandmother was of Ono.

1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba



The following are words of abuse: 192

**Mbakola.** A man killed to be eaten. Formerly it was serious and only used by a nobleman to a commoner, by a man to his very own subjects (**nona tamata sara nga**), or to his younger brother; now it is merely a jest.
**Kaisi.** Lowborn, is common in anger and in play.
**Kawa ni moku.** Descendants of the defeated. This is seldom used, and only, it appears, in earnest, to persons of whom it is true.
**Ndomi lairo.** Suck crabs. Apparently a Thakaundrove expression.

An oath is *mbumbului* or *vosa mbumbului*. Men formerly swore by the chief of the family (*turanga ni yavusa*), the one who governed them. If a man was accused of anything and protested it was not true he would say: "I swear by Tui Naiau" (*au mbumbului vei Tui Naiau*).

## Sexual Relations and Marriage

### Morality

Sexual intercourse is called *veithái*, a word forbidden in presence of women, before whom the term *veindauthi* is used. The word *vala* (to do) is also used as a euphemism. The words *uti* and *pia*, which mean penis, are also not used in the presence of women; the polite term is "a man's thing"; or a woman "a woman's thing." 195 834

Morality is very lax in Lau. Bastards are very common in the pedigrees. Lau has a reputation for laxity throughout Fiji, and the men of Viti Levu are mad about Lauan women. This is the answer a Lauan makes to this charge: 834 848

Lau has a bad reputation because of Tongan ways: men and women talk to each other, and may walk together in the dark without anything being thought of it. They may go together at night through the village from one house to another; it is only bad if they stop and talk outside. In the West it is forbidden even to talk to a woman, or the owner of the house is silent with jealousy. If a man goes and sits close to a woman and she does not shriek and run away, it means she is ready to accept his advances. Yet there is more fornication in the West; but Lau has a bad reputation because the western people do not understand the freedom. Western men coming to Lau waste a lot of money because they think a girl likes them because she talks to them, and they give her plenty of money, but get nothing for it. 834 186

There is a tremendous amount of fornication in the West. There the women are shy and wild. If the man whom a woman likes is in the house, she does not enter, or, if she does, she sits in a dark corner; it is as though she were *sake; sake* means that a woman will not speak to a man whom she likes, or, if she speaks, laughs and is ashamed; in Lau this is the way of immature (*yalowai*) children, not of adults: adults talk together and are not shy. In the West women are like pigs: a man will send for one, or, if he meets her on the way, will lay hold of her: she cannot refuse. A Lau woman will refuse to go with three or four men; she will accept the advances of a man she likes. Women in the West look countrified (*kai lekutu*); here they make kava, roll cigarettes for men and no harm is thought of it.

Formerly young women used to stay in the father's house, and not go about, or if they went about it was in company. Now they go and sleep in the young men's 834

1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba



765 The ceremony of permitting clothes is made an excuse for obtaining such goods as may be wanted. Thus one lady who wanted to exchange bark cloth for mats with her kinsmen of Moala went there to perform the ceremony in honor of the deceased Moala kinsfolk, as she had not been in the island for a long time.

Long after all the feasts are over the relatives sometimes hang scented necklets over the grave, for any man who likes to carry away. Sometimes on those occasions they make kava at the grave.

For one man who died at sea and whose body was never recovered two upright sticks were set up on the beach, a horizontal one laid on this, and bark cloth and garlands hung, just as over a grave.

Formerly songs called *lele* were composed about the dead man and his qualities. None is now known.

775 When a man of Tumbou dies, his soul goes to Namukalevu, a projection of the reef on the east side of the passage. This place is called *i thimbathimba*, the place of dying, and a man is said to die to that place. Opposite the Court House, Tumbou, a sandy spit which runs out into the sea is said to be the causeway (*i kawakawa*) down to Namukalevu. A path of souls (*sala ni yalo*) is believed to be located in the Old Village. This is for Tumbou people only. The resting place of the soul is also called Mbulu (the same word as *mbulu*, to bury); the soul stays there forever, living as a noble. It is said that there is a big village beneath the sea, and that when a man dies the ghosts in Mbulu build him a house there. Levukans have the same dying place as Mbauans.

Emosi says the clan of Naitombo is an exception; while the rest of Valelàilai go with Katumbalevu to Namukalevu, the Naitombo people go to heaven. If one of Naitombo were buried the burial party were overtaken by a shower before they could get home.

In the West it is believed that all Fiji including Lau has its dying place in Naithombothombo, evidently a variant of *i thimbathimba*. The place which bears that name is in Mbua, at the western end of Vanua Levu. Some Lauans accept this view. At Naithombothombo lights may be seen in the houses at night and the spirits heard talking like men. An euphemism for [795] dying is: "His clothes have been carried to Naithombothombo."

There is a place in the West called "the dying place of pots" (*na i thimbathimba ni kuro*), because if a pot is broken its double (*yalo*) goes there.

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara



575 jump, dance, and club one another. While in this state they receive mana in the form of inspiration from their guardians.

Each member is a specialist in some skill and has a guardian of his own whose name he bears. A creator of a new dance form receives them from the god of the dance (*meke*); a medicine man receives new medicines from the god of medicine. The membership of the cult is controlled by a god named Rayawa. When propitiated with kava, Rayawa reveals the names of new members. The man who discovers new members for the cult has Rayawa for his god.

[776 782]

The leader of the cult on each island is called the originator of the bamboo (*vuninduvu*), for, as the oldest bamboo is surrounded by many shoots, so the leader is surrounded by many members. He has the strongest guardian and the most mana. Every new member must make a ceremonial offering of kava to the leader. If the leader is challenged, a contest is arranged during the Luve ni Wai rites and the member who is least vulnerable, and therefore has the most powerful god, wins and takes the leadership.

[782] Native informants say that a Luve ni Wai member occasionally propitiates his guardian by leaving a bowl of kava in the bush. When he returns, not the next day perhaps but certainly after a few days, the kava has disappeared from the bowl.

575 ●195 538 Informants say that in olden days Luve ni Wai members had their own idiom which could not be understood by the people. These old ***meke*** (chants) are difficult to translate, but, when one examines them one sees that poetic license and figures of speech rather than actual vocabulary differences set them apart from modern *meke*. However, many words which appear in the old *meke* cannot be translated by the natives today. The old Luve ni Wai *meke* are lyric poetry, highly subjective, in contrast to the more recent ones, which are definitely realistic.

575 539 The following *meke*, which are not understood by present natives, are said to be in Luve ni Wai idiom:

Nai wau (club dance) chanted by Tatchini of Kambara

| | |
|---|---|
| (Drum beats—small *lali ni meke* type) | |
| Na vatu manawa, na vua i rama | The floating stones, the fruits of light |
| Yau talatala, vakaselotaki mana wangga | The murmuring breeze, welcoming the wonderful canoes |
| Tambu wangga ko ira na kai Mathuata, | Chiefly canoes, they are the people of Mathuata, |
| Laki kele sara i matamatana. | About to anchor at the mouth of the passage. |
| (Drum beats) | |